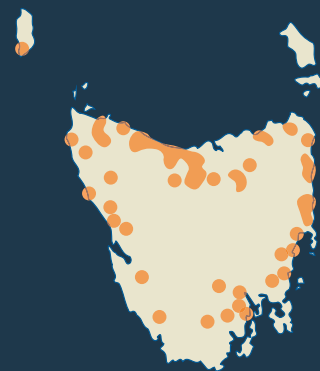


# Grayling

*Prototroctes maraena*



Occurs widely in Tasmania, although uncommon. Mainly in northern and eastern rivers and at King Island. Only found below weirs and dams.

**Description:** The dorsal fin starts high on the back. They have an adipose fin (small fleshy second dorsal fin), thin scales and a keel along the belly. They have a strong cucumber smell when first taken from the water.

**Colour:** Usually dark green to grey olive along the back, with a dark mid-lateral streak separating lighter sides and a silver yellow belly.

**Size:** Commonly 170 to 190 mm but up to 330 mm.

**Habitat:** Adults inhabit creeks and rivers, usually in cool, clear waters over gravel bottoms in sections alternating between pools and rapids. Usually found in clear, moderate to fast flowing water in the upper reaches of rivers (sometimes to altitudes above 1000 metres).

**Diet:** Grayling feed on small crustaceans, insects and their larvae, and algae.

**Life Cycle:** After forming large schools below upstream barriers they will spawn in freshwater between February and May. Eggs sink to the river bed downstream of spawning site. The eggs hatch within 10 to 20 days. The small 2 mm larvae are taken downstream to estuaries and the sea, returning to freshwater after six months where they live for the duration of their life. The returning young fish can make up a part of the 'whitebait' run during late Spring. They have a life expectancy of up to three years and mature during their second year.

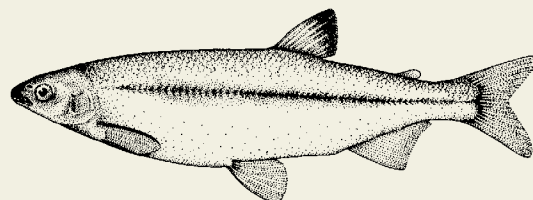
**Distribution status:** Native.

**Original range:** Found in coastal drainages of south-eastern Australia from the Grose River near Sydney southward and westward to the eastern part of South Australia, including Tasmania and King Island in Bass Strait.

**Reasons for change to distribution:** Loss of riparian and instream habitat; In-stream barriers preventing dispersal; High temperatures during low flows; River regulation with loss of dry weather flow and suppression of minor flooding; Extensive stream siltation from erosion; Stream channel damage from sand and gravel extraction; Possible predation by salmonids during the whitebait stage of their life cycle.

**Legal status:** **Vulnerable** (State and Commonwealth lists). **Protected** under *Inland Fisheries Act 1995*.

**Can it be taken?** This species is totally protected and may not be taken without a permit.



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